

Document Name: Child Protection Policy and Procedures			
Code: P-POD-CP-01	Date of next review: 03/05/2019	Family: POD	Version: V1



Child Protection Policy (People and Culture)

INTRODUCTION

Children are vulnerable to abuse or harm as a result of the power imbalance between them and adults in society. This is particularly true for children living in poverty or in a disaster context. Islamic Relief Australia (IRAUS) is committed to taking all necessary steps to minimise the exposure of children to risk of harm, and in the case of suspected harm to ensure appropriate steps are taken to address that situation, while maintaining the safety and comfort of the child involved.

POLICY STATEMENT

IRAUS believes that all children have a right to personal dignity and protection from abuse and it recognises the special responsibility and duty of care it bears to create a safe environment for children within the course of our work. The interest of child safety and protection is paramount to any other interest which might compromise it.

IRAUS is committed to the freedom from harm of all children and prioritises the protection of children who come into contact with our staff and organisation, whether through our programmes, through our fundraising or through any other means. IRAUS is committed to a zero tolerance approach to child exploitation and abuse.

This policy intends to minimize the risk of harm to children through the course of our work. This will be achieved by providing standards of practice to which all IRAUS related parties must abide, implementing responsive and robust child protection risk management procedures within programmes, and in the case of suspected harm, providing children with an accessible and safe channel to pursue resolution.

This policy is informed by and strictly adheres to the UNCRC, Islamic Relief Worldwide's policy, and Australian legislation.

IRAUS adheres to the DFAT child protection compliance standards, and requires all partners to comply with these standards. Compliance is achieved progressively as per the Child Protection Roadmap regulated through the IRAUS Partner Engagement Policy (see Annex 5). As IRAUS is a signatory to the ACFID Code of Conduct, it adheres to the Child Protection standards set forth in in Section B.3.4 of the code.

SCOPE

All IRAUS staff, volunteers, contractors and partners, both within in Australia and in any location where IRAUS is operating or implementing programmes.

EXCLUSIONS

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None.

OBJECTIVES

The key objective are:

- To uphold the rights of the child to freedom from harm by ensuring our work does not result in the harm of children.
- To identify and manage child protection risks within our work and organisation in order to reduce them.
- To codify child protection standards of practice in the areas of Human Resources, Programming, Fundraising and Communications to ensure child protection is prioritised in all aspects of our work.
- To provide a clear and straight forward process in the case of harm to address that situation equitably whilst maintaining the safety of the child or observer.
- To demonstrate the commitment of IRAUS and the individuals who work within it to zero tolerance of child abuse.

DEFINITIONS

Child

As per the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, IRAUS defines a child as any person under the age of 18. Their marital status, position within their family, or work situation does not impact their definition as a child, or the rights that definition infers.

Child Abuse

All forms of physical or mental violence, exploitation or intimidation, including:

- Sexual abuse: the involvement of a child in sexual activity by an adult or someone who is bigger or older. This may involve the use of power and authority or physical force. Sexual abuse can involve sexual behaviours which are physical, such as masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration using any object, involvement in pornography, or non-physical, such as exhibitionism, exposure to pornography, or discussion of an explicit or sexual nature.
- Physical abuse: The use, or threat of use, of physical force against a child for the purpose of, or resulting in, harm to the child. Physically abusive behavior includes slapping, shaking, throwing, shoving, burning, grabbing or kicking.
- Emotional abuse: Failure to provide a child with nurture or emotional support to the effect of threatening a child's self-esteem. Emotionally abusive behaviours involve inappropriate verbal or symbolic acts such as name calling, threatening, ridiculing, humiliating or isolating the child. Exposing a child to domestic violence is a form of emotional abuse.
- Neglect: The consistent failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for the child's physical and emotional development and well-being. This includes a failure to provide food,

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clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care which the caregiver is in a position to provide, to the extent that the child's health or development are at risk of being impacted.

Child Exploitation

Including:

- Child labour;
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of abuse or exploitation against a child;
- Possessing, controlling, producing, distributing, obtaining or transmitting child exploitation material;
- Committing or coercing another person to commit an act or acts of grooming or online grooming
- Child soldiers

Child Pornography

IRAUS adopts the definition within the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child; that being, 'any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.'

Child Sex Tourism

The commercial sexual exploitation of children by men and women who travel from one place to another, and there engage in sexual acts with children. Child sex tourism is a significant problem within some countries where IRAUS is working.

Contact with Children

Contact with children refers to the incidental contact with children that may occur in the course of work even if that work is not child-focused, or indirect contact within the community.

Grooming

The act of an adult or someone bigger or older than a child forming a relationship of trust with them for the purpose of exploiting them to sexually abuse them.

Grooming includes online grooming, which is the transmission of messages via any online medium from an adult or someone bigger or older to a child or someone who the recipient believes to be under 18 years old, for the purpose of forming a sexual relationship.

Inappropriate content

Visual depictions or narratives which are obscene, child pornography, potentially harmful to minors, or content which is not compliant with the Policy on Child Protection in Communications and Messaging. (Annex 3)

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Particularly vulnerable children

Children who are particularly vulnerable to abuse, such as children with physical or intellectual disabilities, child sex workers, homeless children, or children impacted by disaster.

Stakeholders

Those parties including partner organisations, consultants, contractors, suppliers and other third party organisations that are involved in the delivery of IRAUS projects.

Supporters

Those whose contact with IRAUS includes making donations, sponsoring a child, volunteer fundraising, being an ambassador and being a member of the public who has dealings with IRAUS

Working with children

Paid or voluntary positions which include activities involving direct engagement with children as a normal part of that activity, in addition to any incidental contact with children. Positions of this nature require child-safe recruiting (see Policy on Human Resources, Annex 4).

POLICY IN ACTION

1. Child Protection in Programmes

In order to manage risk related to child protection in Programmes, the IRAUS Programmes team will:

- Require a Child Protection Context section of all new project proposals.
- Conduct a child protection risk assessment on all new projects.
- Conduct a child protection risk assessment on all projects that undergo substantial change, or on an annual basis for long-term projects.
- Review and support partners in mitigating and reducing the exposure of children to risk of harm, abuse or exploitation.
- Maintain child protection monitoring in the IRAUS Risk Register for the Country Director to submit as an item on the Risk Report sent to the BOT quarterly.
- Review and report annually to the Compliance Committee on the effectiveness of our IRAUS programme risk assessment tools and processes, and changing or updating as needed.

2. Child Protection in Communications

In order to manage risk related to child protection in Communications and Messaging, the Communications team will:

- Ensure no inappropriate content is used internally or externally for communications.
- Ensure the consent form/audio file from a child's parent or guardian is always attached with the picture within the IRAUS 'Photo Library', or else not use the image in any internal or external communications.

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- Ensure that a child cannot reasonably be identified or specifically located by a picture or case study.
- Ensure no photo or case study is used of a child which may infringe upon their dignity or rights.

3. Child Protection in Human Resources

In order to manage risk related to child protection amongst personnel and within the organisation, the Human Resources team will:

- Maintain a zero tolerance approach to child abuse by ensuring people who pose an unacceptable risk to children are not engaged in identified position involving contact with children or working with children.
- Conduct child-safe recruitment procedures on all recruitments and additional procedures on recruitments that have been identified as 'working with children'.
- Ensure all new staff are inducted into the Child Protection Policy and sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct (Annex 2).
- Ensure all staff are subject to annual police checks and (in states where relevant) specific child protection checks.
- Ensure all staff annually undergo a child protection refresher training, or undergo additional training upon any substantial change to the IRAUS Child Protection Policy or Procedures.
- Ensure all volunteers are inducted into the Child Protection Policy and have signed the Child Protection Code of Conduct, and if likely to have contact with children in the course of their activities or travel with IRAUS undertake a police check and (in states where relevant) specific child protection checks).
- Ensure all BOT members, ambassadors and any individual who visits IRAUS projects overseas are inducted into the Child Protection Policy and have signed the Child Protection Code of Conduct, and undertake a police check and (in states where relevant) specific child protection checks.
- Ensure any person contracted to provide consultancy or other services are aware of the policy and sign the Child Protection Code of Conduct.

4. Responsible Staff Members and Reporting

Country Director: The Country Director is responsible for ensuring that IRAUS remains an organisation committed in principle and action, at all levels, to the protection of children. The Country Director holds all Line Managers or highest level line staff members accountable to this Policy and Code of Conduct

Line Managers or highest level line staff member: The Line Managers or highest level staff members are responsible for coordinating with the HR Department to ensure all staff within their line are inducted into the Policy and have signed the Code of Conduct. They are accountable in ensuring all work done or produced within their department is compliant with this Policy.

Child Protection Focal Point (CPFP): Within IRAUS, the Compliance Committee will appoint a Child Protection Focal Point on an annual basis to be the easily identifiable first point of contact for all concerns or allegations regarding a possible breach of the Policy or Code of Conduct. Additionally, the CPFP will assist

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the HR Department in inducting new staff into the policy, or conducting refresher training. The CPFC will also be responsible for monitoring all sources of child protection principles mentioned in this Policy- and any new sources as they should arise- to ensure the Policy remains relevant and up-to-date.

All staff, volunteers and ambassadors: All IRAUS staff, volunteers and ambassadors are required to comply with the IRAUS Child Protection Policy, Child Protection Procedure and Child Protection Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to remain alert and responsive to any child protection risks. IRAUS staff are required to ensure they are aware of reporting procedures so they can follow them correctly and inform volunteers where necessary.

Reporting procedures are outlined in the Child Protection Procedures, and should be followed upon any occurrence of suspected child abuse. There is no penalty for instigating Child Protection reporting under any circumstances or against any staff member.

POLICY ANNEXES

(Include documents which support or are specifically referred to within the policy.)

1. IRAUS Child Protection Procedures
2. IRAUS Child Protection Code of Conduct
3. IRAUS Policy on Communications and Messaging
4. IRW Child Protection Policy